

Summary

Tisbury Vision Planning Workshop 1: Challenges

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This summary is based on the full transcription of the workshop flip charts and individual participant note cards. The full transcription is available at the Tisbury Planning Board. This summary list of challenges begins with the conditions that were mentioned most frequently and ends with those that received fewer comments. Red text indicates concerns that were expressed by a significant number of participants

I. Infrastructure

Challenge: to upgrade town infrastructure to meet the needs of a growing population, accommodate safe travel, and mitigate impacts on sensitive historic and environmental resources.

Traffic Congestion

- Difficult intersections
- Cars unloading from the Steamship on Water St.
- Narrow streets
- Poor signage and one way streets are disorienting

Parking

- Lack of parking near the village center and businesses
- Parking lots take up too much space in the village center

Safe bike travel

- Streets are narrow
- Lack of designated bike routes and paths
- Discontinuous paths and lanes dump people into traffic
- Many tourist and visitors are not experienced bike riders
- Town routes do not fully link to larger island bike paths and routes
- When not maintained the ROW bike lanes and shared use paths cover with sand and are dangerous

Safe pedestrian travel

- Hazardous condition - narrow width and condition of sidewalks
- Sidewalks are discontinuous leaving pedestrians in the road
- Poor maintenance - sand and overgrown shrubs

- Handicap accessibility
- Street lighting

II. Town government

Challenge: To improve coordination among departments, strengthen communication with town residents, and improve financial management and decision making strategies.

Governance

- Lack of open communication and sharing information with town residents
- Lack of coordination among departments and boards
- Information Technology is limited and inefficient
- Lack of a parks department
- Lack of new blood
- Perceived insider game
- Bureaucracy is hard to navigate
- Entrenched policies
- Town meeting format

Financial

- Prioritization of capital expenses
- Tax rate
- Ever rising town budget
- Pensions under funded
- Inadequate financial revenues to support a town with so many needs
- Balanced economic growth
- Provide greater value for tourists to increase tourism revenues
- Need to encourage entrepreneurial spirit

Efficiency

- Inefficiencies in education and police across island
- Departments located in different buildings
- New Town Hall
- Human resource management
- Facilities management
- Growth of the police force

III. Dilapidated condition of buildings and general maintenance.

Challenge: to repurpose vacant buildings, improve maintenance of public properties and encourage private owners to maintain their property.

Vacant buildings

- Hurts tax base
- Safety

Blight

- Key buildings on Main Street are run down and have a negative impact on the appearance of the entire street.
- Disincentive to invest
- No course of action to address condition
- Poor impression

Maintenance

- Town Properties are not well maintained and present a poor example for private sector.
- Trees and landscaping need pruning and ongoing maintenance
- Trash and recycling bins are not readily available in town.

IV. Planning and community

Challenge: To address impacts associated with growing community and increased tourism while meeting the needs of a year-round working community that values diversity, desires to maintain its local businesses and seeks to preserve its history and traditions.

Identity/Staying Tisbury

- Meeting the needs of year round community
- Maintain sense of place without restricting innovation
- Dependency on tourism

Planning

- Dealing with population growth and crowding
- Limited space left
- Zoning to protect resources, views, treasures, etc.
- Rigid mindset - resistance to change
- Special interests divide community
- Education of citizens for government process

Demographics and affordability

- Growing elderly population
- Keeping young professionals
- Lack of year round affordable housing
- Affordability - taxes, living expenses, services
- Energy costs

V. Climate and environment

Challenge: To live responsibly, by respecting the dynamic environmental processes, mitigating development impacts on sensitive resources and responding to future environmental change.

Water quality in the ponds

- Septic leaching, dredging, lawn and road runoff impact Lagoon Pond and Tashmoo
- Damage to ecosystem and shell fish
- Much discussion but without action

Climate change and sea level rise

- Impact on residential, commercial and industrial areas
- Need a town wide plan

Protecting the aquifer

- Preserving the quality of fresh, potable water

VI. Commerce and economy

Challenge: To strengthen the local economy while meeting the needs of a year-round community and increasing opportunities for seasonal markets.

Diversification

- Lack of choice
- Don't need another T shirt shop
- Need a summer/winter balance
- Loss of small scale businesses
- Strengthen and distinguish three different commercial areas

Year round economy

- Limited year round options for affordable goods and services
- Need a good grocery store in village center
- Lack of affordable restaurants open for dinner year round

Main Street

- Vacancy detracts from vitality of Main Street
- Limited night life
- Need Main Street collaboration - business association

VII. Waterfront

Challenge: to increase public access to the waterfront and create areas where people can participate in water based activities and view the varied harbor activities.

Access

- Town's greatest asset has little designated public access
- Inability to walk along the edge of the waterfront for any distance.
- Private waterfront ownership
- In town waterfront access is nonexistent

Diversity of use

- Areas on harbor and lagoon that are currently underutilized
- Increase economic benefit
- Cultural resources inaccessible

Appearance

- Unattractive and unwelcoming island gateway

VIII. Natural areas

Challenge: to improve access, maintenance and programming of public parks, beaches and open space.

Access and use

- Not well marked
- Use unclear
- Parking limited
- Not meeting potential for public benefit
- Public beach/swimming access limited

Maintenance

- Lack of trash receptacles
- Not well maintained